

Appl. No. 09/992,454
Amdt. dated December 2, 2004
Reply to Office action of October 5, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-8 and 10-13 as amended in Amendment C filed July 12, 2004 are presently pending in the application. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that Claims 2-6 and 8 are allowable.

In this amendment, Claims 7, 12 and 13 have been amended.

Claims 10 and 11 have been canceled without prejudice to filing a continuation with respect thereto.

Claims 3-6 and 8 remain unchanged.

In this amendment, Claims 7, 10 and 11 have been amended to depend from Claim 6, which the Examiner indicated as being allowable. Claim 7 as originally filed depended from Claim 6, but in response to a prior office action, was placed in independent form. Claim 7 in its present form corresponds to Claim 7 as originally filed.

Independent Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over the newly cited reference to Laudenslager et al. (Pat. No. 6090018). Although Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's asserting that the '018 patent renders the invention of Claim 10 obvious, Claim 10 has been canceled in order to expedite issuance of a patent from this application.

In view of the fact that all the claims now pending in the application depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1 (which is indicated to be allowable), and the

Page 5 of 6

01 December 2004
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rejected claims have been canceled from the application, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the application, Claims 2-8 and 12-13 are believed to be in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowability with respect to these claims is thus respectfully requested.

Dated: 12/2/04

Respectfully Submitted,


Jonathan P. Soifer, Reg. No. 34,932
Polster, Lieder, Woodruff & Lucchesi, L.C.
12412 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 200
St. Louis, Missouri 63131
Tel: (314) 238-2400
Fax: (314) 238-2401
e-mail: Jsoifer@patpro.com